

conductive segment 110. The via 105 is coupled to the pad 102 by a conductive segment 112. The via 106 is directly coupled to the pad 102. To directly couple the via 106 to the pad 102, after the via 106 is formed in the substrate 101, the pad 102 is formed substantially over the via 106 such that the via 106 is physically and electrically coupled to the pad 102.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please substitute the claim set in the appendix entitled Clean Version of Pending Claims for the previously pending claim set. The substitute claim set is intended to reflect cancellation of claims 1 and 6-15, amendment of previously pending claim 2 and the addition of claims 21-40. The specific amendments to individual claims are detailed in the following marked up set of claims.

✓ Please cancel claim 1 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend the claims as follows.

2. (Amended) An interconnect comprising:
a substrate;
a pad formed on the substrate; and
at least two vias coupled to the pad. [The interconnect of claim 1,] wherein [at least] only one of the at least two vias is formed substantially beneath the pad.

✓ Please cancel claims 6-15 without prejudice or disclaimer.

✓ Please add the following new claims.

21. (New) The interconnect of claim 2, wherein the pad comprises copper.

22. (New) The interconnect of claim 21, wherein the at least two vias comprise cylindrical conductors.

23. (New) An interconnect comprising:
a substrate;
a pad formed on the substrate; and
at least three vias coupled to the pad, wherein only one of the at least three vias is formed substantially beneath the pad.
24. (New) The interconnect of claim 23, wherein at least one of the at least three vias is coupled to the pad by a tapered conductive segment.
25. (New) The interconnect of claim 24, wherein the tapered conductive segment comprises copper.
26. (New) The interconnect of claim 25, wherein the tapered conductive segment comprises a hyperbolic taper.
27. (New) The interconnect of claim 26, wherein the pad comprises gold.
28. (New) The interconnect of claim 27, wherein each of the at least two vias comprise triangular conductors.
29. (New) An interconnect comprising:
a substrate;
a pad formed on the substrate; and
at least four vias coupled to the pad, wherein only one of the at least two vias is formed substantially beneath the pad.
30. (New) The interconnect of claim 29, wherein at least three of the at least four vias is coupled to the pad by a tapered conductive segment.
31. (New) The interconnect of claim 30, wherein the tapered conductive segment comprises

aluminum.

32. (New) The interconnect of claim 31, wherein the tapered conductive segment includes an exponential taper.

33. (New) The interconnect of claim 32, wherein the pad comprises tungsten.

34. (New) The interconnect of claim 33, wherein each of the at least four vias comprise square conductors.

35. (New) An interconnect comprising:
a substrate;
a pad formed on the substrate; and
at least five vias coupled to the pad, wherein only one of the at least five vias is formed substantially beneath the pad.

36. (New) The interconnect of claim 35, wherein the pad comprises silver.

37. (New) The interconnect of claim 36, wherein the at least two vias comprise hexagonal conductors.

38. (New) A method of forming an interconnect, the method comprising:
forming three vias in a substrate;
forming a conductive layer above the three vias; and
etching the conductive layer to connect each of at least two of the three vias to the conductive layer through a tapered conductive segment.

39. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein forming three vias in a substrate comprises forming three triangular vias in the substrate.